SITUATING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE AFRICA CONTINENTAL QUALIFICATION FRAMEWORK (ACQF)

MOSES ABIERO

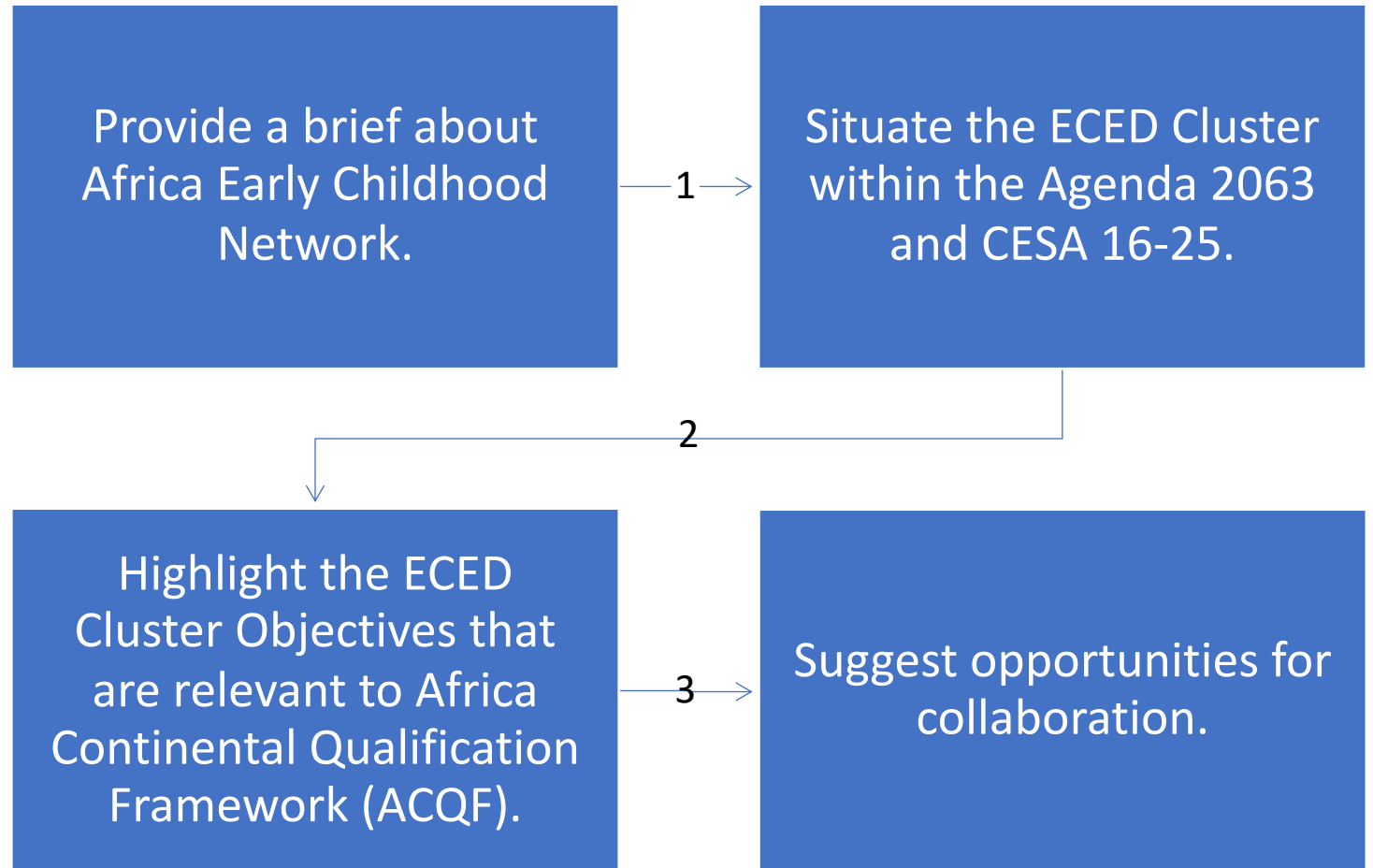**Africa Early Childhood Network (AfECN)**

ACQF PEER LEARNING WEBINAR

SESSION 4

30 JUNE 2021 (10.00-12.30 GMT, 13.00-15.30 KENYA TIME)
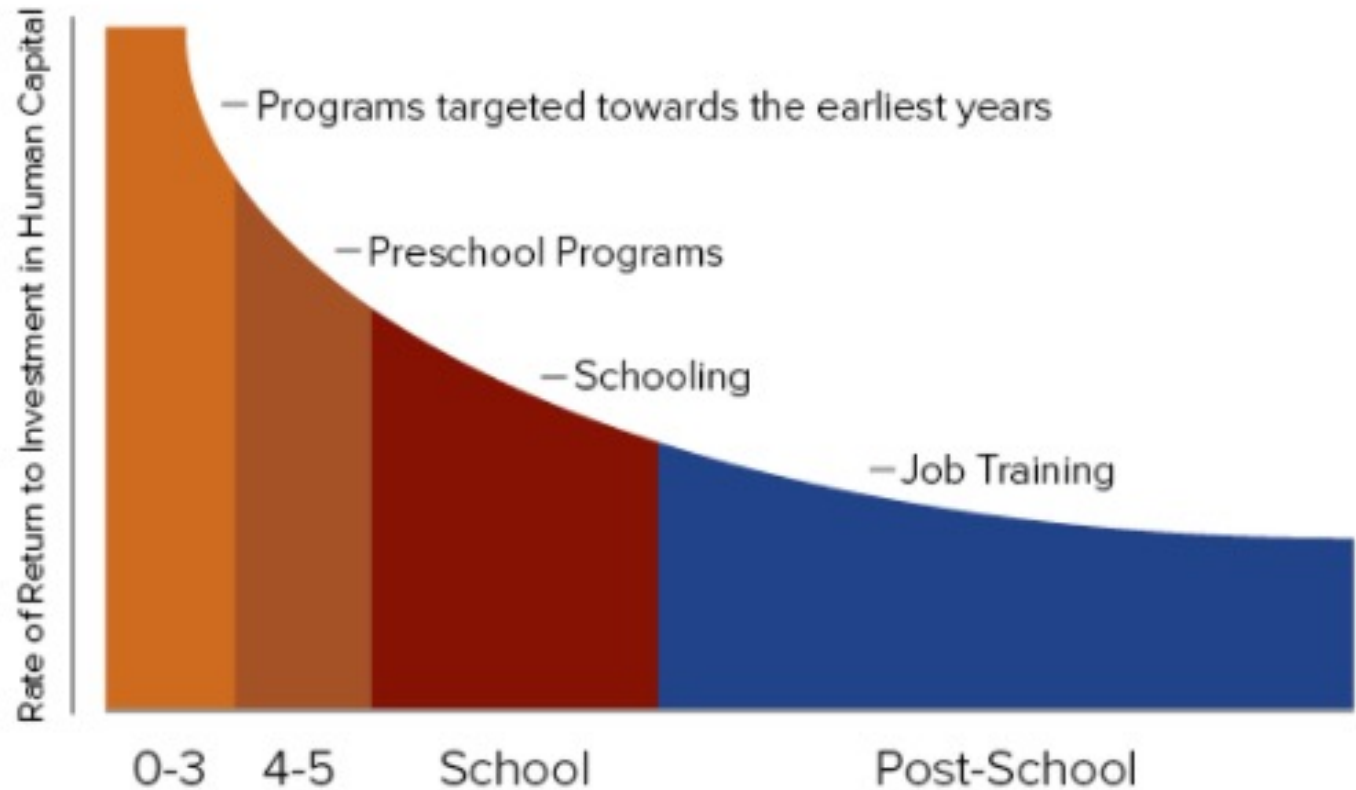
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Why invest in Early Childhood Development

Investment in child health, care and education during early years provides a critical foundation for accumulation of human capital needed to realize their potential as productive members of society.

Better human capital outcomes are associated with higher earnings for people, and better socio-economic development of a nation.

Returns to a Unit Dollar Invested are Highest in Earliest Years

— Programs targeted towards the earliest years

— Preschool Programs

— Schooling

— Job Training

Rate of Return to Investment in Human Capital

0-3 4-5 School Post-School

Source: Heckman & Lafontaine, 2007

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About Africa Early Childhood Network (AfECN)

❑ The Africa Early Childhood Network (AfECN) serves as a platform to champion excellence and collaboration in protecting children's rights, influence policy and practice, strengthen partnerships, and share experiences and knowledge in ECD on the African continent.

❑ The network brings together civil society organizations, academia, and the private sector at national and regional levels. AfECN works through five core programmes to guide collaborative partnership efforts towards the achievement of improved child outcomes for all children in Sub Saharan Africa:

- o   Regional Advocacy,
- o   Strengthened Partnerships,
- o   Knowledge Generation,
- o   Improved Practice, and
- o   Leadership Development.

❑ AfECN coordinates activities of the AU CESA 16-25 ECED cluster. The cluster supports and advances efforts towards effective implementation of CESA 16 -25 objectives related to the early years.

❑ Participation in AU ECED Cluster Activities by registering through the link below.

AfECN Membership Application | AfECN

ECED Cluster

Agenda 2063 calls for universal access to quality early childhood, primary and secondary education, ensuring that no child is left behind, and that the potential of every child is nurtured.

CESA16-25 identifies pre-primary education as a neglected sub-sector that deserves special attention.

CESA 16-25 recognizes Early Childhood Education and Development (ECED) as the pillar for future learning and identifies ECED as the next frontier if Africa is to realize sustained quality education and training.

To support implementation of the continental framework (CESA16-25) objectives related to early years, the African Union Commission (AUC) launched the ECED Cluster on 4th September 2018.

ECED Cluster Objectives

Objective 1: Enhance Policy, Advocacy and Communication.

1.1 Increase advocacy to strengthen political will and financing for policy development and sustainable implementation of strategies.

1.2 Enhance Policy Development

Objective 2: Intensify action to improve equitable access to quality. ECED programmes and services.

2.1 Enhance advocacy for equitable access to quality services.

2.2 Improve early learning infrastructure.

2.3 Increase ECED programmes and services

Objective 3: Improve Quality of ECED systems, programmes, and services.

3.1 Strengthen the capacity of the ECED workforce.

3.2 Support relevant and comprehensive regional and national curricula.

3.3 Enhance quality assurance and assessment mechanisms.

Objective 4: Improve Governance and Accountability

4.1 Enhanced accountability

4.2 Improved governance and management
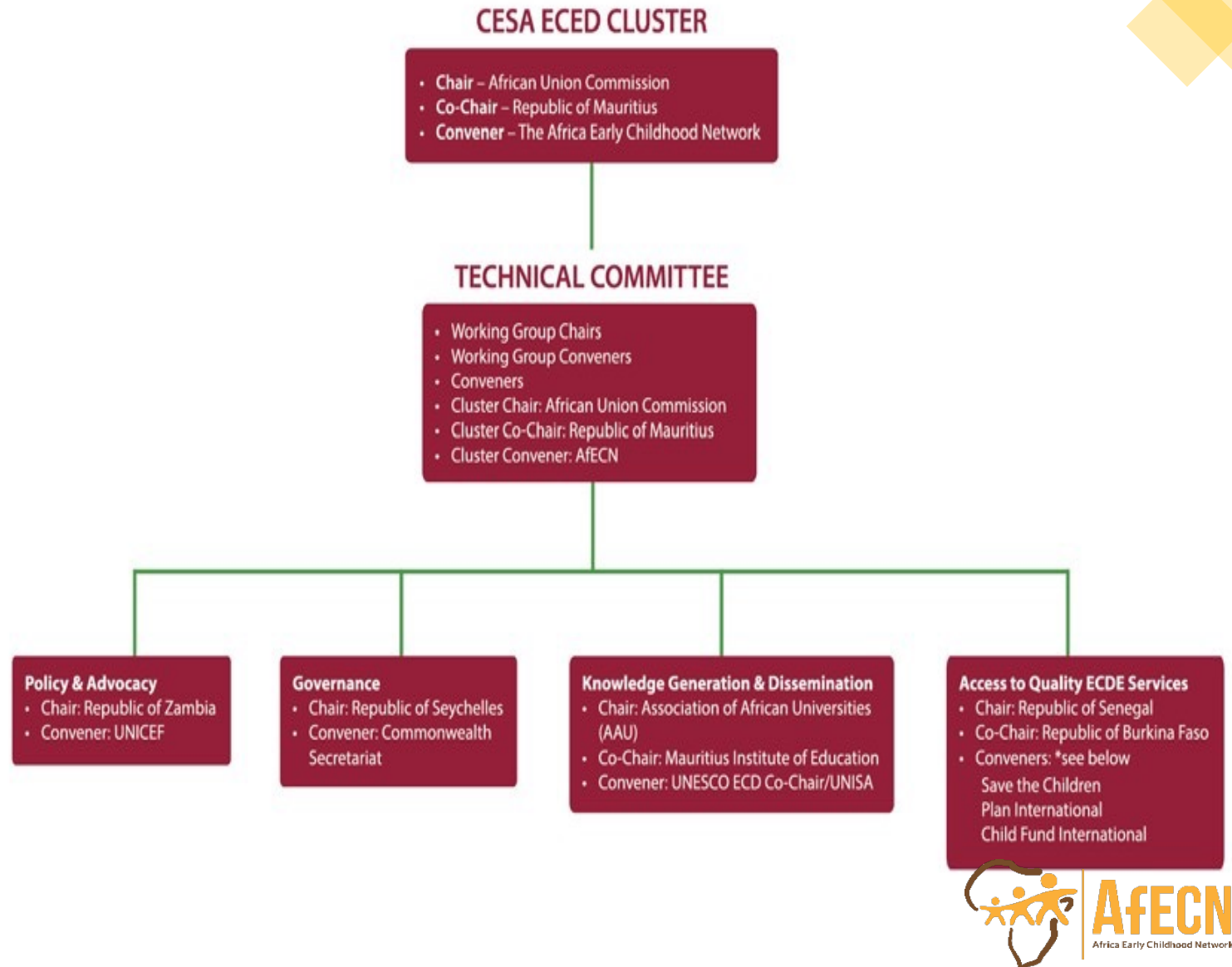
Objective 5: Enhance Research Generation, Documentation and Dissemination

5.1 Knowledge generation improved.

5.2 Improved dissemination of ECD knowledge and experiences

Objective 6: Strengthen partnership and collaboration across all key stakeholders including state and non-state actor.

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How ECED Cluster is Structured

- The Cluster is chaired by the African Union Commission, with the Government of Mauritius as the Co-Chair.

- The African Early Childhood Network (AfECN) acts as coordinator and secretariat to the Cluster.

- To operationalize the cluster and further streamline operations, a technical committee and four working groups were established.

- ECED Cluster working Groups
  - Policy, advocacy, and communication;
  - Governance and accountability;
  - Access to quality ECED services; and
  - Knowledge generation and dissemination.

- Each working group has a Member State serving as chair and a development partner as the convener.

- The chairs and conveners of each working group as well as AUC, AfECN and ICQN together form the technical Committee.

CESA ECED CLUSTER

- **Chair** – African Union Commission
- **Co-Chair** – Republic of Mauritius
- **Convener** – The Africa Early Childhood Network

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

- Working Group Chairs
- Working Group Conveners
- Conveners
- Cluster Chair: African Union Commission
- Cluster Co-Chair: Republic of Mauritius
- Cluster Convener: AfECN

Policy & Advocacy
- Chair: Republic of Zambia
- Convener: UNICEF

Governance
- Chair: Republic of Seychelles
- Convener: Commonwealth Secretariat

Knowledge Generation & Dissemination
- Chair: Association of African Universities (AAU)
- Co-Chair: Mauritius Institute of Education
- Convener: UNESCO ECD Co-Chair/UNISA

Access to Quality ECDE Services
- Chair: Republic of Senegal
- Co-Chair: Republic of Burkina Faso
- Conveners: *see below
  Save the Children
  Plan International
  Child Fund International

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ECED Cluster Objectives relevant to the Africa Continental Qualification Framework (ACQF) Project

	ECED Cluster Objective 3: Improve Quality of ECED systems, programmes, and services.
3.1	**Strengthen the capacity of the ECED workforce**
3.1.1	Conduct a landscape analysis of the ECED workforce across the region
3.1.2	Develop regional workforce development strategy (including career path, continuous development, good working and living conditions)
3.1.3	Develop a framework for implementation of a strategy for continuous professional development
3.1.4	Recruit, train, and deploy well qualified teachers as well as promote their continuous professional development with emphasis on instilling core values, results and accountability to learner's skills and competencies as well as mobility across the sub-sector.
3.1.5	Capitalize on existing and successful ICT-driven initiatives that enhance access to training including the Pan-African E-University
3.1.6	Develop quality and relevant teaching, play and learning materials and resources
3.1.7	Create mobile and online education and training platforms and accessibility to all students regardless of their circumstances
3.1.8	Identify and reward dedicated and innovative ECED teachers
3.2	**Support relevant and comprehensive regional and national curricula**
3.2.1	Design and support adoption of a regional ECED curriculum framework that includes emerging issues such as peace education, conflict resolution and HIV
3.2.2	Develop guidelines to strengthen national implementation of ECED curricula
3.2.3	Strengthen national curricula including gender sensitive ECED training curricula, to provide the foundation for development of life skills, creativity and other key competencies
3.2.4	Develop and support the national adaptation and institutionalization of a regional framework for assessment of school readiness
3.3	**Enhance quality assurance and assessment mechanisms**
3.3.1	Develop and implement a national quality improvement framework and roadmap
3.3.2	Set up national qualification frameworks (NFQs) and regional qualification frameworks (RFQs) to facilitate the creation of multiple pathways for professional development
3.3.3	Establish and strengthen quality assurance mechanisms to support systems strengthening and improved child outcomes
3.3.4	Provide implementation support to ensure ongoing monitoring, learning, evaluation, and improved programming

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Key milestones related to ECED Teacher Qualification

❑Conducted Analysis of Early Learning Workforce in Sub-Saharan Africa;

❑Developed a guideline for improving quality and capacity of ECED Workforce in Africa;

❑ Participation in Teacher Development cluster activities, including sharing of best practices to improve ECED teacher qualification and professional development across the region;

❑ Strengthening capacity of National Advocacy Partners (NAPs) in 17 African countries to support and provide input to ECED policy development and implementation including improvement of ECED workforce development.

Opportunities for Collaboration with ACQF

❏ Dissemination of AfECN guidelines for improving quality and capacity of ECED Workforce in Africa;

❏ Analysis on the extent of integration of ECED into National Qualification Frameworks;

❏ Development of regional workforce development strategy (including career path, continuous development, good working and living conditions)-**ECED Cluster objective 3.1.2;**

❏ Setting up of national qualification frameworks (NFQs) and regional qualification frameworks (RFQs) to facilitate the creation of multiple pathways for professional development-**ECED Cluster objective 3.3.2**

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THANK YOU

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